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AT-2724

CONFIDENTIAL

AUG 26 1953

Auth: DDA Memo, 4 Apr 77  
Date: DDA REG. 77/1 [redacted]  
130278

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Paramilitary Staff

SUBJECT: The Clandestine Fieldcraft Activities Course

REFERENCE: a. Memo from Director of Training to CPM, dated 29 June 1953, subj: "The CFA Course"  
b. Memo from CPM to Director of Training, dated 14 July 1953, subj: "The Clandestine Fieldcraft Activities Course"

1. We have carefully studied the comments and recommendations contained in your memorandum of 14 July 1953, and have reached the following conclusions:

a. The CFA will continue as a four-week integrated course at least for the next two already scheduled and announced presentations.

b. The next running of the CFA will be carefully reviewed again to determine if any substantial reduction of training time can be effected without interfering with the mission of the course.

c. Presentation of the course will not be suspended, and it will be offered as scheduled.

2. Some of the reasons involved in reaching these conclusions are as follows:

a. The CFA has been regarded from the outset as a practical skill course as opposed to a theoretical familiarization course. If the mission is to impart certain skills, you reach a certain irreducible minimum of training time. If certain of our operations involve skills which we must impart to others, it is our position that the substitution of familiarization material for the skill itself is unsound.

b. [redacted] Situation which terminates the instruction is designed to test the student's aptitude in all of the skills acquired in the course. Most personnel attempting to cope with this problem without benefit of the complete instruction would have a serious disadvantage. Several of the elements of the instruction [redacted] play a prominent part in the problem.

c. We have tried "blocking" at least one other course into elective units of instruction with the following experiences:

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AUG 26 1953

(1) All of the full-time students were critical because it forced them to go through a continuous and progressively advanced series of periods on a specialized subject without any intervening time to "digest" the material.

(2) It reduced the effectiveness of the instructor because it required him to present continuous instruction in his specialty without benefit of an interval for preparation and review.

(3) Only one student enrolled on a part-time basis and for a reason that was entirely personal (his wife was expecting a baby before the course was scheduled to end).

d. We have offered and will continue to offer special tutorial training in the various segments of our course when the operational considerations of an individual require it.

e. This is the only course in TR(S) offering a substantial block of instruction in Mapping. It would seem to us that this is a practical skill that all operational personnel should possess.

f. We have already assured all of the Divisions that we will adhere to our already announced schedule so that they may plan their training at least several months into the future. Suspension of the course might undermine the purpose of the extended schedule and work a hardship on those who must have it.

g. Cancellation and suspension has an adverse effect on the vitality of a course. Instructors must be diverted to other tasks; and continuity of personnel and research and the improvements that come only with the experience of actual presentation are lost.

h. The CFA was originally offered as a three-week course. It was the opinion of the students that the physical pace, particularly for older staff personnel, was too fast. The additional week was added to slow the pace and bring the course easily within the physical capabilities of most Agency personnel.

/s/  
MATTHEW BAIRD  
Director of Training

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